

DMCPS AND QIC WD PARTNERSHIP: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE TO STRENGTHEN THE CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

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Evaluation Lead: Becky Antle

Implementation Lead: Lisa Merkel-Holguin

Workforce Lead: Megan Paul



Needs Assessment Process

- A variety of information was explored to learn about the current workforce and the agency's workforce practices, including
 - 1) recruitment, hiring, and retention metrics and processes,
 - 2) organizational culture and climate, and
 - 3) other workforce processes and initiatives, such as onboarding, mentoring, supervision, performance management, and employee recognition.
- Four major types of information were considered:
 - 1) objective data from various agency databases and reports;
 - 2) subjective perceptions of staff and supervisors, gathered through surveys and focus groups;
 - 3) expertise and input of the project steering committee; and
 - 4) QIC-WD team expertise and feedback.

Needs Assessment Results

- Over a 2.5-year time period (January 2016–mid 2018), 80 staff departed the IAS position
 - 65% were resignations/retirements, 10% were transfers, and 11% were promotions.
 - Data from DMCPs indicates that the majority of staff leave within the first 2 years and that the average tenure of dysfunctional voluntary leavers was 19.2 months, or 1.60 years.
- The Organizational Social Context baseline survey showed that there were several aspects of both culture and climate that were in need of improvement, including
 - 1) a hierarchical decision-making structure,
 - 2) high role conflict and change resistance among staff, and
 - 3) low sense of personal accomplishment and cooperation among staff
- Focus group themes included
 - Factors related to retention
 - Job expectations: met and unmet
 - Stressors and stress management
 - Handling of critical incidents
 - Role of formal and informal leaders
 - Factors related to culture and climate
 - Factors related to turnover
- Root cause analysis discussions were held with workers and with the implementation team and identified three key changes needed:
 - 1) worker involvement in identifying, understanding, and solving agency problems that are stressful to staff and/or compromise effective service
 - 2) supervisors and leaders understanding the importance of positive and constructive feedback and taking action to recognize workers' successes and accomplishments
 - 3) collaborative analysis and problem solving around issues that contribute to perceptions of unfairness or antagonism among coworkers.

Intervention Selection

- The QIC-WD team and the steering committee considered the fit of potential workforce interventions each option with the following QIC-WD criteria:
 - 1) alignment with agency need
 - 2) level of existing evidence of effectiveness
 - 3) applicability to other agencies' needs and circumstances
 - 4) scope and magnitude, relative to agency and QIC-WD capacity
 - 5) evaluation potential
 - 6) contribution to a diverse array of interventions across QIC-WD sites
 - 7) agreeable to both the agency and the QIC-WD
- ARC determined to meet best the needs and priorities of DMCCPS

What is ARC?

- ARC stands for Availability, Responsiveness and Continuity
- ARC is a repeatedly-proven organizational change intervention that improves work settings (cultures and climates) for staff who serve children and families
- What frontline staff do is what ARC is about
 - ARC ensures that the front-line those have a stronger voice in making improvements that influence the ability to get your job done.
 - ARC is about going beyond identifying or ruminating about barriers to solving them.
 - ARC is about creating positive cultures and climates that support the work of front-line staff with children and families

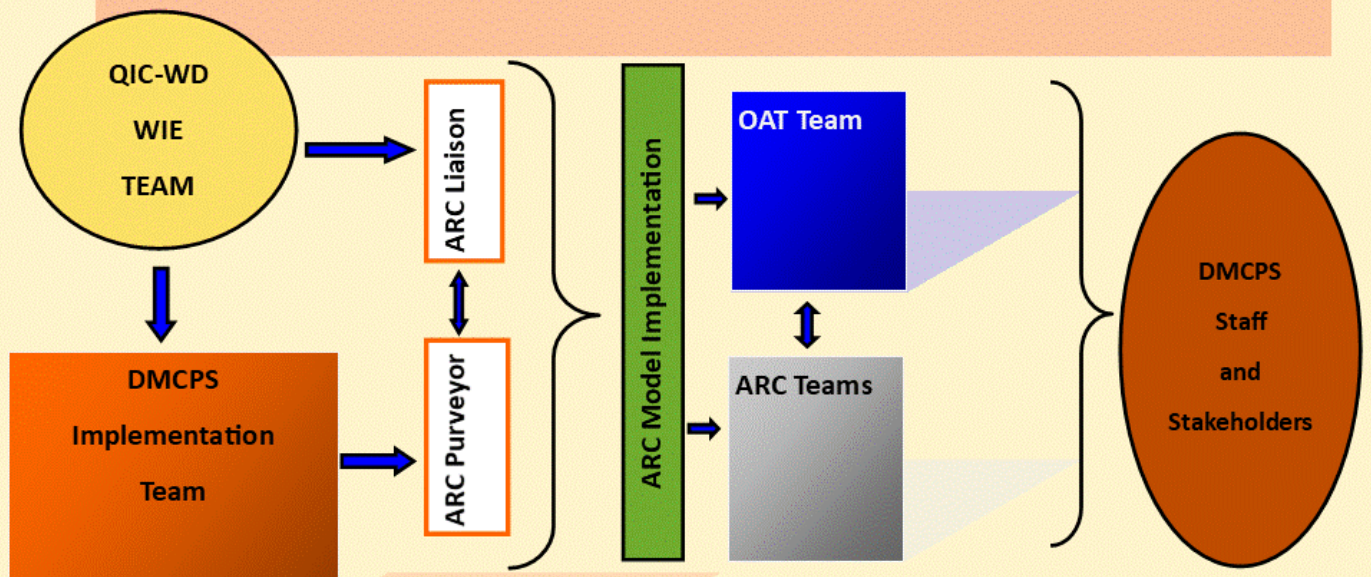
ARC Guiding Principles

- **Mission-driven** vs. rule-driven – all staff and administrative actions and decisions contribute to children’s well-being
- **Results-oriented** vs. process-oriented – measure staff and program performance by improvements in children’s well-being
- **Improvement-directed** vs. status quo-oriented – staff and administrators continually seek to be more effective
- **Relationship-centered** vs. individual-centered – staff and administrators focus on consumer and stakeholder relationships
- **Participation-based** vs. authority-based – include line-level staff and community stakeholders in key program decisions

12 ARC Component Tools

- Leadership development
- Personal relationships
- Network development
- Team building
- Information & training
- Feedback
- Participatory decision-making
- Conflict resolution
- Goal setting
- Continuous improvement
- Job redesign
- Self-regulation

Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services
Accountability , Continuity and Responsiveness Implementation Process



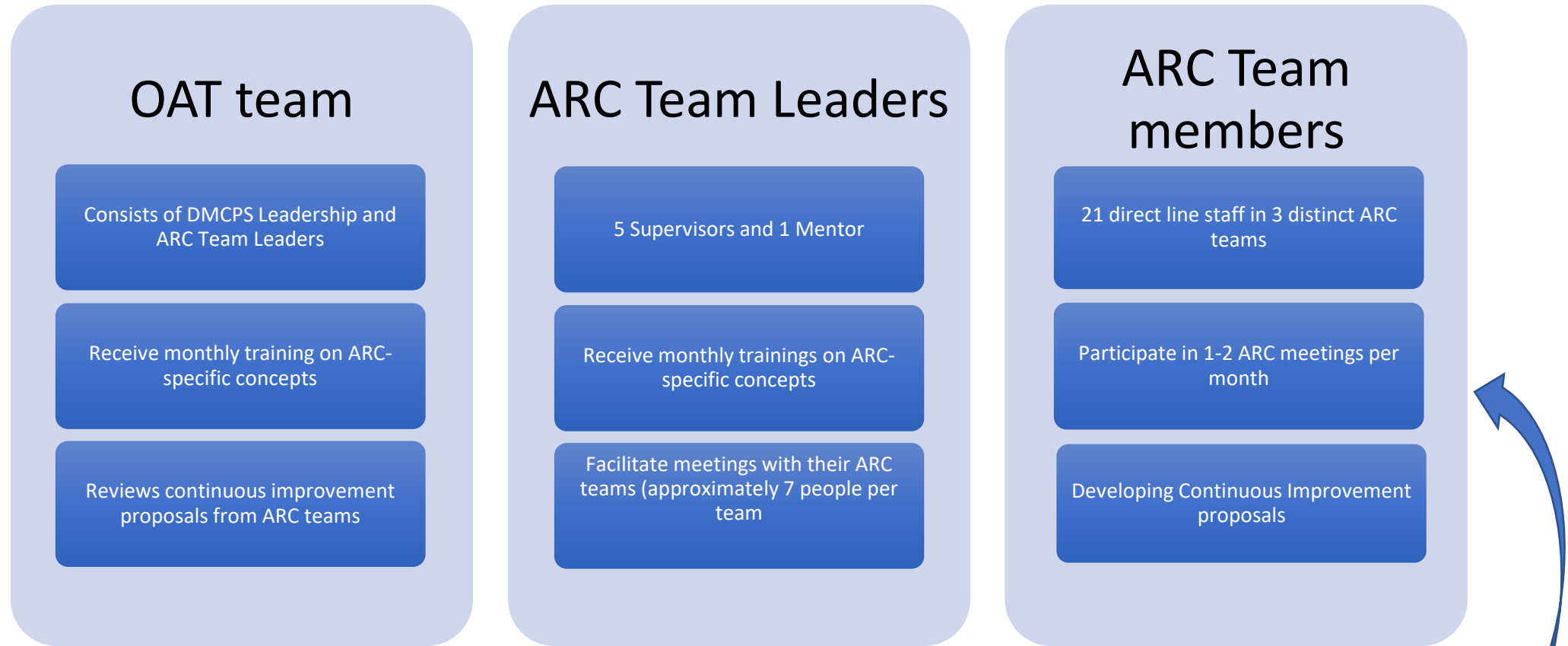
QIC-WD (WIE) Team consists of a Workforce, Implementation and Evaluation Specialist.

ARC Purveyor and ARC Liaison. The ARC Purveyor who provides training and technical assistance to DMCPS. The DMCPS ARC Liaison supports the implementation of the ARC processes in DMCPS.

DMCPS Implementation Team consist of DMCPS leadership, DCF leadership and frontline staff

OAT Team and ARC Teams. The Organizational Action Team (OAT) and the Accountability, Consistency and Continuity (ARC) Teams consist of agency leaders and ARC Team Leaders. DMCPS has 3 ARC Teams comprised of 6 team leaders and 21 frontline staff.

ARC Structure



ARC Supports

ARC Liaison: Lilia Figueroa

ARC Specialist: Tony Hemmelgarn

QIC-WD team: Lisa Merkel-Holguin (Implementation Specialist); Becky Antle (Evaluator); and

Megan Paul (Workforce Specialist)

ARC Team Member Responsibilities

The Responsibilities of Front-line ARC team members:

- Identify and work through front-line service barriers
- Propose and implement solutions to barriers
- Monitor evidence and data to assess changes in barriers and outcomes
- Find, test, and implement new tools, training, processes, tools, etc.
- Assume increasing responsibility for improving the organization and its functioning

**Division of Milwaukee
Child Protective
Services**



If, DMCPs implements ARC an evidence-based model of shared leadership and accountability as a practice for leadership and frontline staff, and ...

If, DMCPs implements system changes to support awareness, knowledge and fidelity of ARC and its *Guiding Principles* within the organization, and ...

If, DMCPs leadership and staff engages in shared leadership practices that increase efficacy and staff empowerment,

Initial Assessment Specialist will have increased levels of job commitment and satisfaction resulting in lower staff turnover, and

DMCPs will have Initial Assessment Specialist with longevity and skill to support children, youth and families through challenging life developments, and ...

Children and youth will experience fewer removals from their homes, receive quality prevention supports and services and if removed, timely coordinated permanency and placement stability

Evaluation of Impact of ARC on Organizational Culture and Climate

Organizational Social Context (OSC)

- **Culture:** Shared behavioral expectations and norms that characterize and direct behavior in a work environment. Three dimensions are most predictive of human services outcomes:
 - Proficiency: the norms and expectations in the agency are that staff will be highly skilled and focused on client well-being
 - *“Members of my unit are expected to become more proficient at serving clients”*
 - Rigidity: the norms and expectations in the agency support a hierarchical decision making structure.
 - *“Any decision I make has to have a supervisor’s approval.”*
 - Resistance: staff resist change or new ways of doing things either actively or passively.
 - *“Members of my unit are expected to not make waves.”*
- **Climate:** Shared employee perceptions regarding how their work environment impacts their own psychological well-being and functioning. Three dimensions are most predictive of human services outcomes:
 - Engagement: staff engage well with children, families and community partners and feel a sense of accomplishment in the meaningful work
 - *“I feel I treat some of the clients I work with as impersonal objects.”*
 - Functionality: when supervisor team is a “well-oiled machine” where roles and expectations are clear, support from co-workers and supervisors is tangible and strong, and there is a focus on staff development, growth and advancement via clear career paths.
 - *“This organization emphasizes growth and development.”*
 - Stress: staff show signs of emotional exhaustion, role conflict (conflicting expectations or priorities), and role overload (too many things to do).
 - *“I always have more to do than what I can get done.”*
- **Morale:** Individual-level perceptions of two dimensions:
 - Job Satisfaction: staff are committed to the organization and feel satisfied with the job leading to overall positive morale. “
 - *For me, this is the best of all possible organizations to work for.”*
 - Organizational Commitment: staff are willing to go the extra mile to ensure that positive outcomes for families
 - *“I am willing to put in a great deal of effort in order to help this organization be successful.”*

Data Collection Details

- Timeframes
 - Time 1 January 2018
 - Time 2 February 2019
 - Time 3 February/March 2020
 - Time 4 May 2021
- Sample
 - Time 1: N = 109
 - Time 2: N=89
 - Time 3: N=81
 - Time 4: N=71
- Limitation
 - Can not compare individual scores across time at the individual level; scores are reported in aggregate and reflect change at the group level

UCLA Data Viz on OSC

Organizational Social Context (OSC) Data

QIC-WD QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Updated: 12/15/21

Select View
 by dimension
 by scale

Select Aggregation Level
 Total Site
 Lower Level

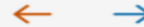
Select Site
 Milwaukee

Select Lower Level
 (All)

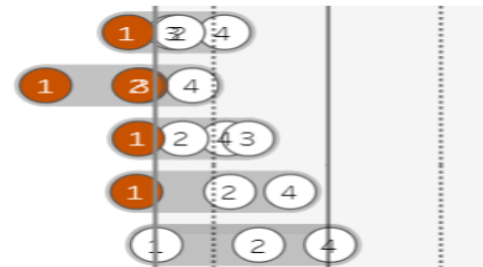
Color Legend
 Strength
 Within Normal Range
 Needs Improvement

Got Questions?

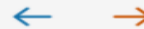
OPTIMAL ATTRIBUTES



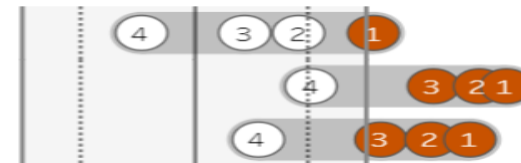
Climate	Functionality
	Engagement
Culture	Proficiency
	Job Satisfaction
Morale	Organizational Commitment



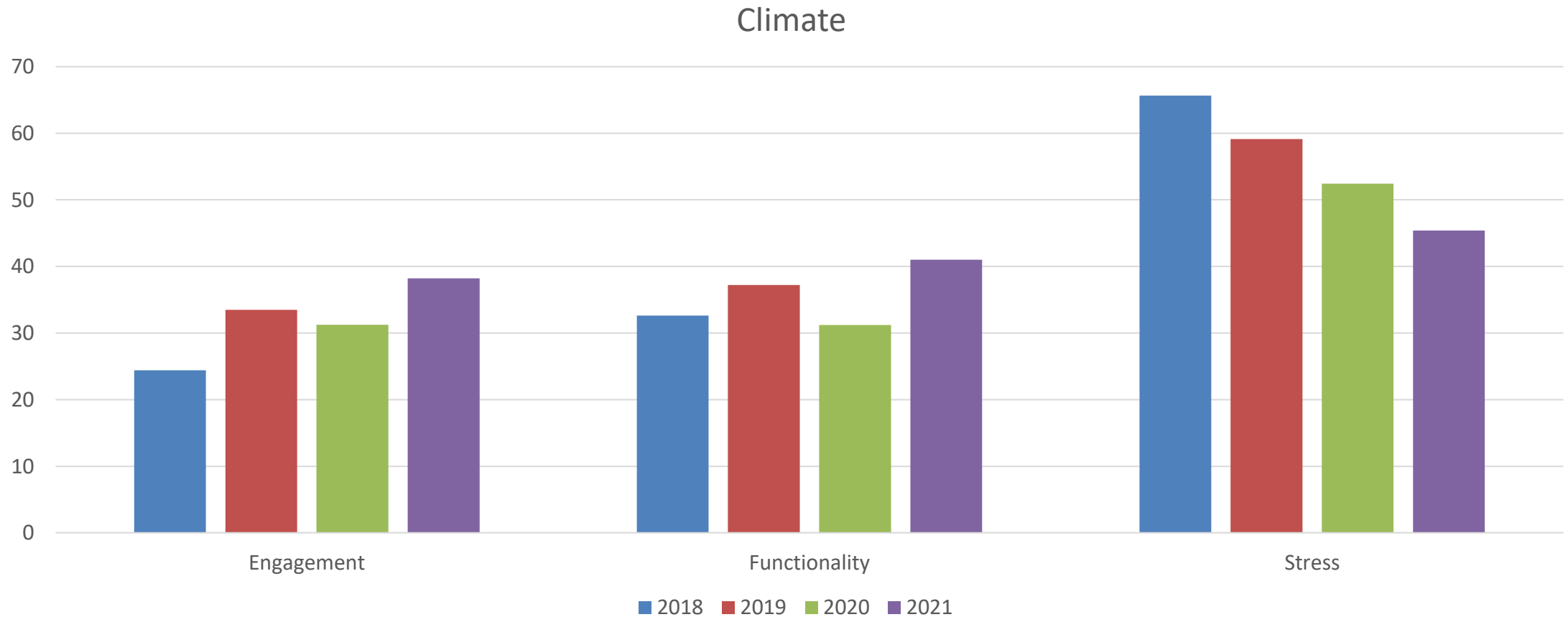
ADVERSE ATTRIBUTES



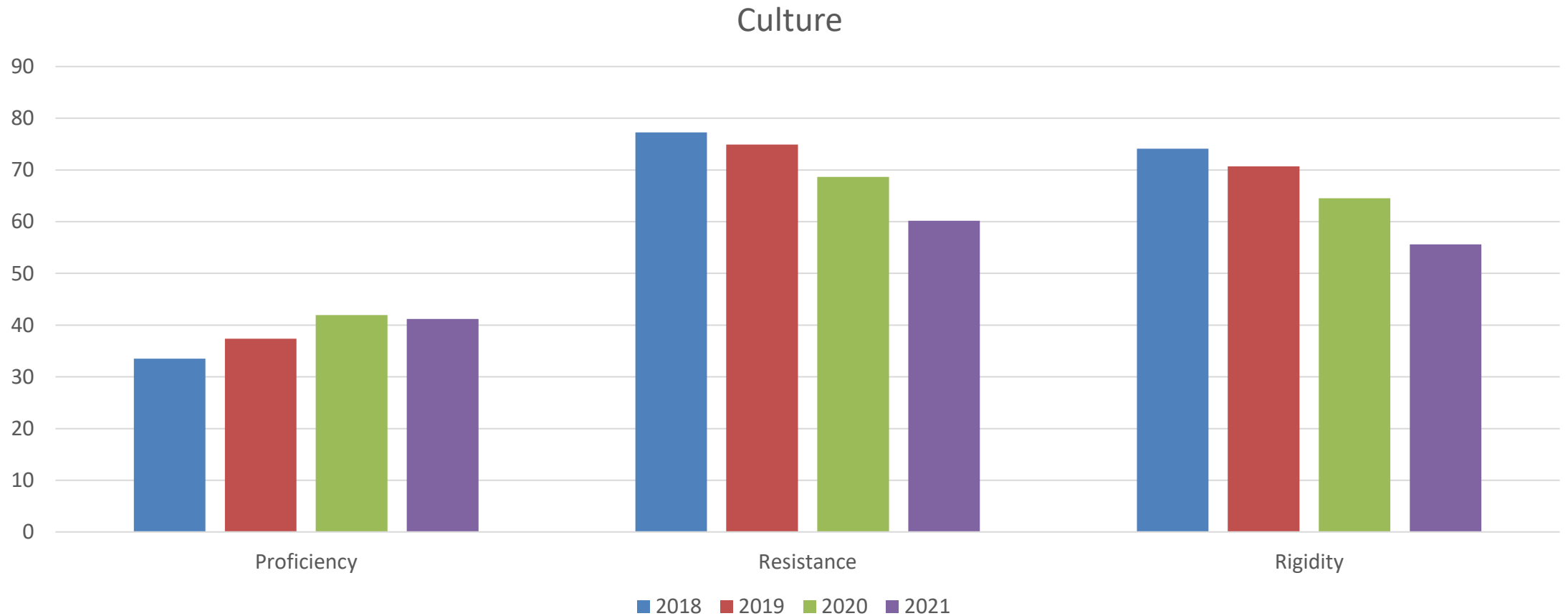
Climate	Stress
	Resistance
Culture	Rigidity



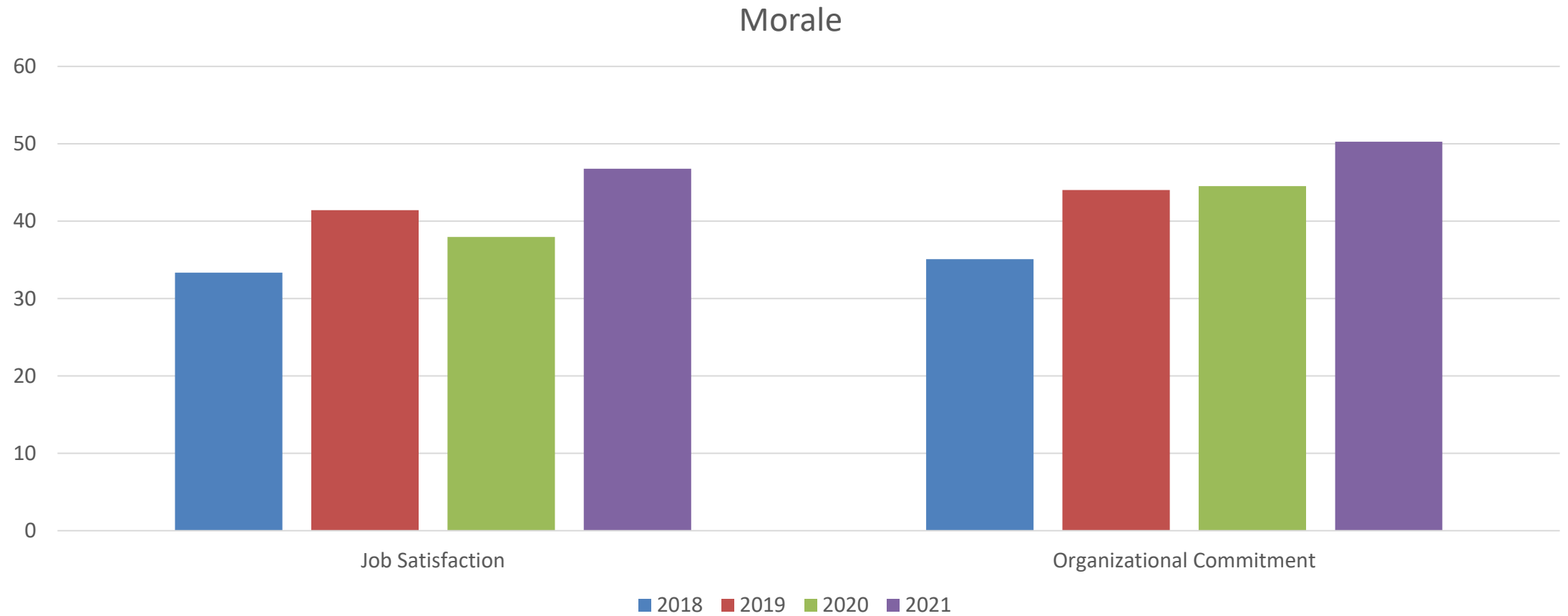
OSC: Climate Major Categories



OSC: Culture Major Categories



OSC: Morale

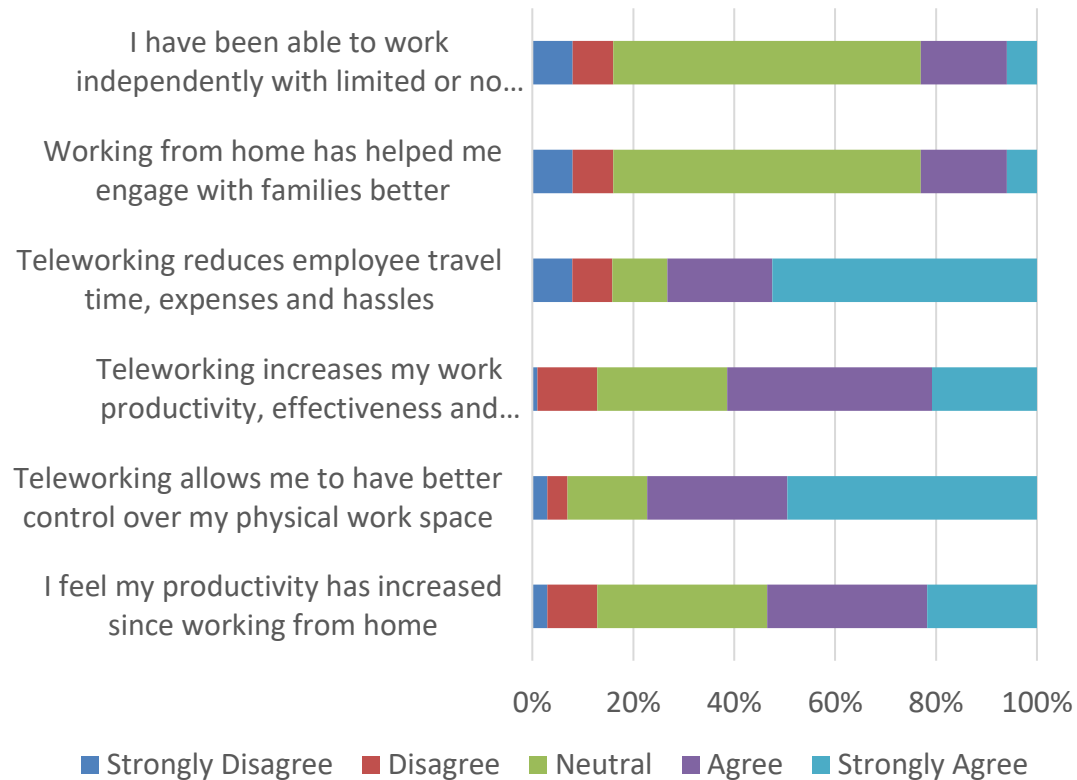


COVID Survey Research

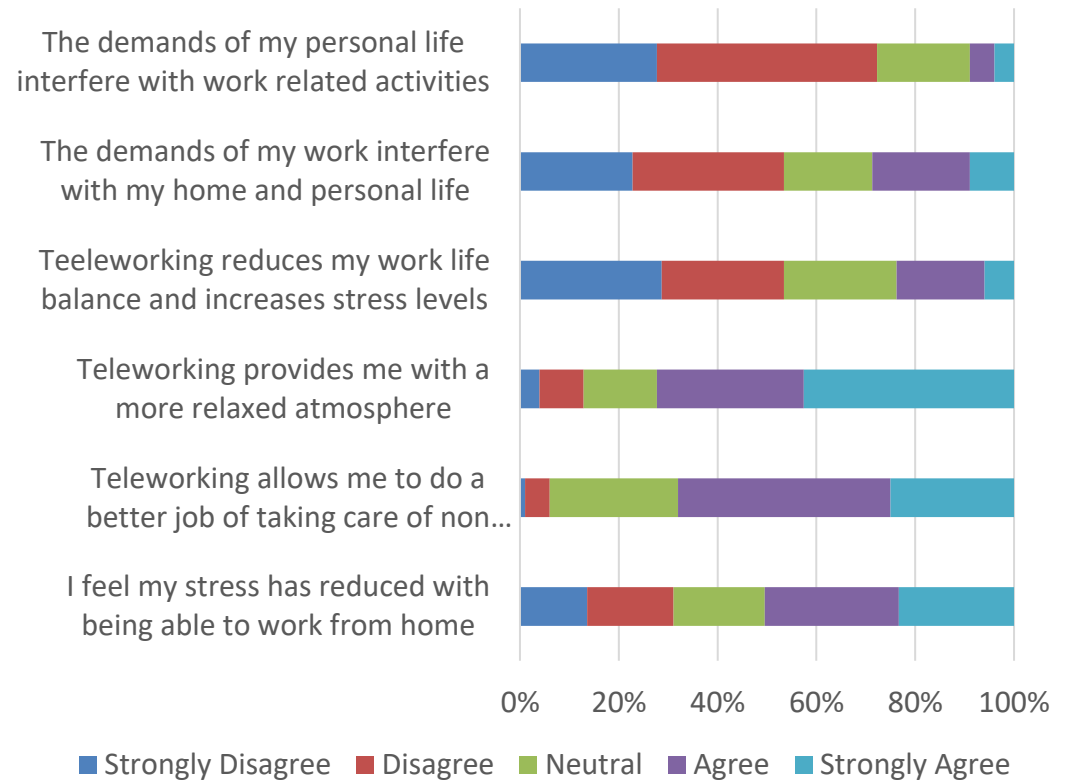
- Survey administered in 2020 electronically
- Survey contained approximately 200 items on COVID stressors, pivot to remote work, impact on casework and workforce
- 80 people responded to the COVID-19 survey
- Results have ongoing relevance due to shift to telework for many employees of DMCPS

Productivity and Well-Being

Productivity Measures

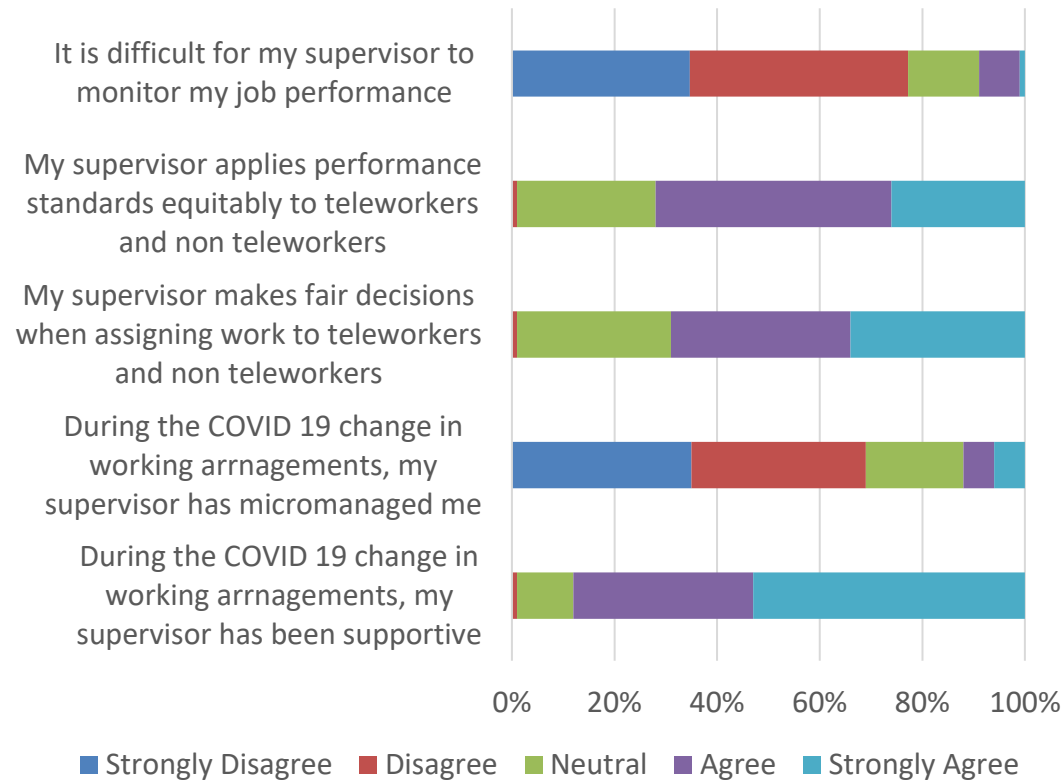


Well-Being

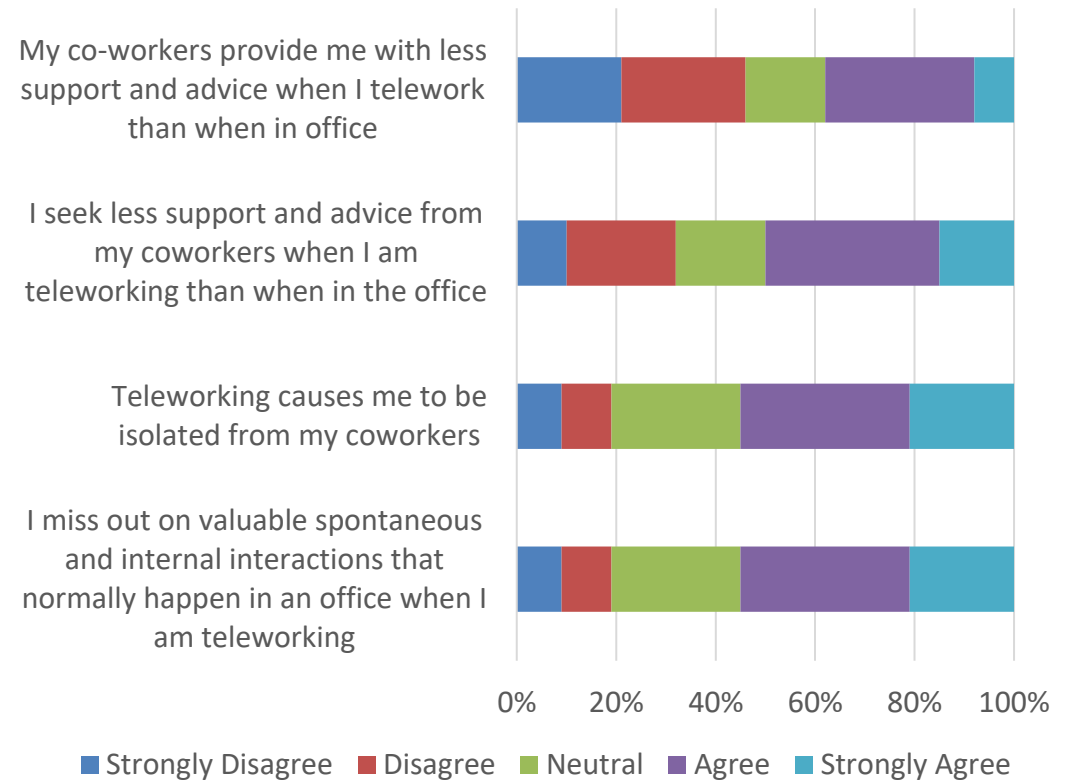


Supervisor and Peer Support

Supervisor Support of Telework



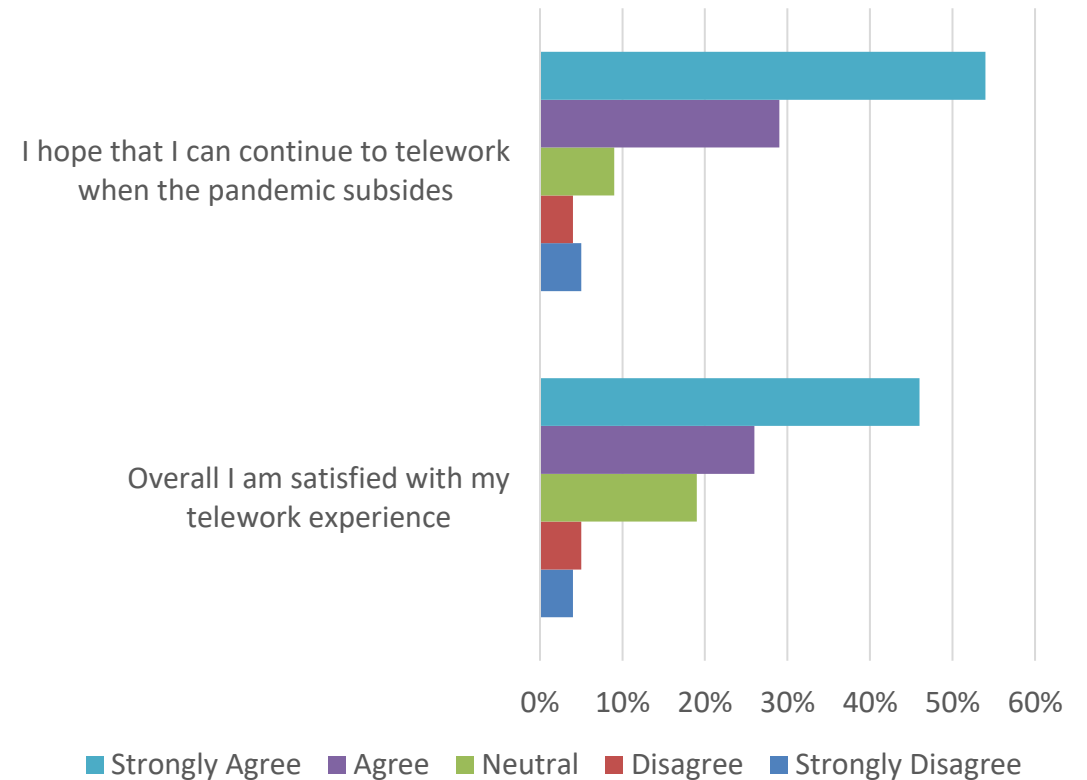
Interactions with Peers



Want to Continue Telework

	After CV-19
Overall I am satisfied with my teleworking experience	M=4.06 4% strongly disagree, 5% disagree, 19% neutral, 26% agree, 46% strongly agree
I hope that I can continue to telework when the COVID-19 pandemic subsides	M=4.23 5% strongly disagree, 4% disagree, 9% neutral, 29% agree, 54% strongly agree

Want Telework to Continue



Summary of Findings and Implications for Future Telework

- Overall positive perception of agency response: staff wanted more on various topics specific to technology and engagement
- More productive: Caught up on documentation (25%), beauty of working in quiet space or own space, not wasting time commuting, in court, etc. 54% agreed/strongly agreed that productivity increased
 - Especially good for parents of college students
- Engagement of families- Contact with families decreased from pre CV-19 (visits with families, monitoring visitation, transporting children), and only 15% said working from home helped staff engage families better
- Continue to build capacity of families to engage virtually (get them devices and software, help them get set up)
- Positive supervision- Supervisors pivoted and supported telework, most didn't micromanage, were seen as fair and equitable and were able to monitor, give advice on casework and were perceived as supportive. Less frequent contact but felt supported
- Peer interactions slightly decreased and workers missed the connection and support.
- Well-being was preserved (reduced stress, more life-work balance)
- Overall satisfied with teleworking and want to continue

Conclusions

- Rigorous needs assessment identified key priority of organizational culture and climate for DMCPs
- Early QIC engagement and work with the site implementation team was associated with preliminary improvements in dimensions of culture and climate
 - Engagement of workforce through focus groups, data collection, data presentations, root cause analysis
 - Engagement of leadership in analysis of data and organizational needs, root cause analysis, discussion of existing efforts and future needs
 - Involvement of all levels of organization in selection of intervention through mixed quantitative and qualitative process
 - Enthusiasm and optimism because of potential for change from intervention
- Improvements in culture and climate continued over the two years of ARC implementation despite the COVID 19 pandemic, resulting in significantly better scores across multiple dimensions of the OSC.
 - Other survey data supports improvements in specific areas of decision-making and conflict resolution related to ARC implementation.
- Simultaneously DMCPs experienced change from other sources
 - Changes in organizational leadership at multiple levels (within and outside DMCPs such as change in governor, secretary, and others)
 - Changes in workforce through hiring of new frontline workers
 - Organizational efforts to address workforce needs such as trauma informed care, champions for change
 - Shift to telework due to COVID 19 and ongoing opportunity to work remotely
- Other impacts on the workforce and organizational outcomes continue to be explored. ARC teams continue to address challenges. Other efforts to address culture and climate, promote psychological safety remain priorities.

Thank you to the great Milwaukee team!

Questions?
